

# **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR ENHANCING THE BUSINESS AND ENGINEERING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN A SUPPLIER AND A BUYER**

## **Abstract of the Disclosure**

In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, data is exchanged between a buyer and a plurality of suppliers via an internet supplier on-line system. The process includes, generating by a buyer a request for a quotation from at least some of the plurality of suppliers for the cost of a part or device. A determination is made if the request for the quotation will include attachments. When the request for quotation will include attachments, documents are generated wherein the request for quotation and attachments include both engineering and business documents. The determination is made as to which of a plurality of suppliers are to be provided with the request for quotation and attachments. An inquiry is then made as to whether all suppliers which are to be provided with a request for quotation and attachments are registered on the supplier on-line system. If a desired supplier is not presently on the system, the supplier is registered and a notification to the buyer is made upon the registration. Next a determination is made whether the request for the quotation is for a commodity part or device or it is for a non-commodity part or device. Thereafter, the buyer selects which suppliers are to receive the request for quotation pack, and the request for quotation pack is made available to the selected suppliers on the on-line system web site. The selected suppliers are then e-mailed alerting them that the quotation package is available at the web site.

Upon reviewing the web site, the supplier is able to download the request for quotation pack including the engineering and business information. Once the supplier has downloaded this information, and the e-mail is automatically generated to alert the buyer that such actions have occurred following an analysis of the request for quotation pack, the supplier is able to enter a quotation or bid by uploading information including additional documentation to the buyer via the web site.

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